

23
AN

ORATION

DELIVERED BY

REV. T. STARR KING,

OF BOSTON, MASS.,

AT

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ORATION.

CITIZENS OF FULTON :

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

We are once more permitted by Divine Providence to celebrate one of the most remarkable days in the calendar of history. The grandiloquent and indiscriminating rhetoric that has been used to adorn it, has had the effect to turn the purest and most sensitive minds from full sympathy with the popular celebration of it; but every one that understands its mission, sees that few other days can claim such a posterity; and, just in proportion to our comprehension of its office in history, will be the depth of our reverence and joy.

If all of us could, at this moment, catch a glimpse of what the Fourth of July has done for millions of men,—if we could have followed with our eyes the rays of its anniversary sun, this day, from the moment when they tinged the eastern-most point of the National domain, as they carried the morning radiance across the many lines of longitude, and over State after State, until they gilded the headlands of California, and brightened the Pacific bays,—we should have a spectacle before us of wide spread plenty, peace, intelligence, thrift and power, which is *the living Oration* in behalf of our National jubilee, written on the breadth of a Continent for its parchment, with States for its paragraphs, and institutions for its imagery,—an oration, which should make all of us rejoice that the memories of this day are part of our social heritage. The prosperity which your own imperial State, and the town, by whose invitation I speak, enjoy, is not the exceptional success of a region aided by accidental circumstances:—it is connected with the vigor of the Union; it is a symbol of the growth and strength of the whole nation,—a single leaf, nourish-

ed by the juices, and budding from one shoot of the giant oak of the Republic.

I have thought it best not to select a single and narrow topic for exhaustive or continuous treatment, believing that I should best honor the invitation you have extended, by running rather over the octave of great principles which our Anniversary more prominently suggests, than by dwelling upon any single note, however rich its tone. I cannot but feel also that the day will be more appropriately celebrated by us, if we refrain from the cheap eloquence that appeals to the surface of our sensibilities, and meditate together upon the ideas that ennoble our national holiday, as we turn towards the past, or connect it with the future.

The first mood which this anniversary should inspire, is *gratitude for the blending of providential agency with the fidelity of our fathers in their revolutionary work*. Men engaged in a great practical enterprise, seldom see the whole bearings, tendencies, and promise of it. The Greeks that triumphed at Platea and Salamis, had no conception of the service those two victories would render to humanity. They fought for their own hearths and freedom; but they did not see that their trophies were to be something more than scores of standards taken, and heaps of Persian dead. They could not see, that they were hewing open a path through which Pericles and Phidias, and the tragedies of Sophocles, and the Parthenon, and Plato were to march out of the ideal world, where they were dwelling as possibilities, into the clear light of history. They were faithful to the first external duty at their hand, and Providence, through that fidelity, was ensuring the developement of the Greek intellect and genius, and thus the education of the world in beauty.

Martin Luther, again, could not foresee the beneficent sweep, or even a small arc of the sweep, of his reform movement in civilization. He could not see how the intellect of Northern Germany, and the vigor of Saxon England, and the blood of the

Puritans, and the civilizing mission of the railway and steamship, were depending on the vigor with which he affirmed the principle of spiritual liberty against Popes and before Kings.

And so the men of the Revolution had but feeble conception of the drift and products of their work. They had the good old English love of liberty and hatred of oppression, and they determined to throw off the yoke that galled their necks, cost what it might. Each of the actors performed his part well; but not the wisest of them,—not Adams, Jefferson, or Washington, comprehended the genius of the play.

We should be very poorly off, if we were dependant upon human plans and foresight for our blessings. Mortal fidelity is essential; but its service is that of the *cog-wheel*, which plays, as it turns into the larger wheel of Providential purpose and arrangement. And so the action of our ancestors, which they supposed was chiefly for their own benefit, for a certain definite good, started a vaster scheme of providential service;—and none can be so amazed, as most of those would be, who spilt their blood for the independence of the Colonies, at seeing the stupendous results which have echoed from their heroism.

If, as sober students of the records of our race, we were to select the lines of history that offer the most striking evidence of higher guidance, they should be, first, the outline of the Hebrew history, with its successive developement of the patriarchal, prophetic and christian religions; and secondly, the history of America from its discovery, down through the persecution of the Puritans, the life of Washington, the siege of Yorktown and the treaty of Paris. The Jewish race was guided and guarded that a universal religion might at last issue from their genius. Our land seems to have been consecrated to the office of bearing a just and faultless polity that shall educate the world.

Step by step, we may parallel the providential mercies of one history by those of another. The call of Abraham to a new region which God would reclaim from barbarism, and make the cen-

tre of redeeming influences upon humanity, has its echo in the call of Columbus, within whose brain the two hemispheres (as if by inspiration) were indissolubly welded into a globular idea.—The leading of the Israelites through the Red Sea, has a counterpart in the division of the waves to let the little Mayflower, with its precious freight of principles and souls, sail safely through the winter storms. And the line of Hebrew heroes who fought for a great hope, and of volcanic prophets who towered, at intervals, from the landscape of the nation's life, and sent up into literature the flame of the nation's aspiration, are not dishonored if we compare with them the heroic men of our own annals, who “builted better than they knew,” and the seers whose minds have glowed with the American idea.

I speak of this point first,—passing somewhat out of the range of the usual anniversary oratory to do so,—because I am convinced, if we would have a worthy and satisfactory idea of our great political struggle, we must connect it thus with a providential plot, and see it fitted into a divinely tended loom, viewed merely as a succession of battles and military manœuvres, to be estimated by the rules of war—by the management of difficulties, the personal prowess displayed, the strategic operations and bloodshed, it could not divert the admiration of mankind from Austerlitz, Leipsic and Marengo. Or even, when we turn from the fortitude and valor of that period, to *the ideas* which the prominent actors consciously held, we shall not find that it has such a glory as invests it when we see that it completed a series of tendencies, hopes, and prophecies, which began when the Puritans landed at Plymouth, and that it set in motion a vast train of influences for the good of the human race, whose end is not yet; nay, whose end will not be for ages.

Do not suppose, however, that any seasons of human history are divorced from the divine thought—that the laws of any period are anything else than the laws of divine justice and order.—“The times are always the masquerade of the eternities.” Ce-

lestial forces lie behind *all* human action, as every minute which is marked off by the hands of the clock, is measured by the internal mechanism. But on the immense dial-plate of history, as upon the face of a common time-piece, there are some moments more important than others, more impressive and suggestive of the unseen forces than others, because they mark *another hour*. The American revolution was one of these transitions and epochal seasons. Another sixtieth minute was falling due upon God's register. Slowly and unobserved the moral pendulum had swung, and the ideal wheels were playing, carried by the dead weights of the insane English legislation, till at last, *the striking* of the clock was heard; and the battle of Bunker Hill, and the Declaration of Independence, and the surrender of Burgoyne, and the closing military scene at Yorktown, and the treaty that insured the separation, and Washington's Inauguration, came with solemn precision,—not as ordinary national events, but strokes from the hammer in the horologe of time, “pealing through the universe the change from era to era.” If we recognize the real glory of this day, we must do it partly through grateful thoughts of Providence, which ordained that the labors of our ancestors should be thus connected with its schemes of good for posterity, and that so momentous an hour should be struck on these shores.

And, secondly, the return of this Anniversary,—partly thro' these grateful memories that fasten upon the past, and the devout gratitude that aspires towards Providence, should refresh and deepen the sentiment of patriotism in every breast, thus arming and inspiring us for *present duties*. I shall not dwell at any length here upon the legitimacy of such a sentiment, though it might be proper and profitable to do so. For many moralists tell us that *the law of universal love* is the only law that is safe for guidance. So it is. But the law of love is the principle of the spiritual universe, just as the force of gravity is the governing law of space. It connects each particle of matter and every

other particle; but it *attracts inversely according to the square of the distance*, and so becomes practically a series of *special, local* forces, binding our feet to one globe, and allowing a *general* unity, which the mind appropriates through science or meditation with far off spheres. We cannot love the whole world and nobody in particular. The soul that has most of the Christian sentiment of universal love will have the most intense special affections. However deep the baptism of the spirit in general good-will, a man must look with a thrill of love which nothing else can awaken, into the face of the mother that bore him; he cannot resolve the ties that bind him to filial responsibilities, and a brother's devotion: and so Providence has ordained that out of identity of race, a common history, the same scenery, literature, and laws,—though in perfect harmony with an active good-will to all men,—the wider family feeling, the distinctive virtue, Patriotism should spring.

If the ancient Romans could believe that the yellow Tiber was the river dearest to heaven; if the Englishman can see a grandeur in the Thames which its size will not suggest; if the Alpine storm-wind is a familiar home song to the Swiss mountaineer; if the Laplander believes that his country is the best that the sun shines upon; if the sight of our nation's flag in other lands, awakens sentiments that speed the blood and melt the eyes; if the poorest man feels a proud consciousness of property in the great deeds that glow upon his country's annals, and the monuments of its power and glory; let us confess that the heart of man was made to contract a special friendship for its native soil, its kindred stock, and its ancestral traditions, and that where the sentiment of Patriotism is not deep, a sacred affection is absent, an element of virtue is wanting, and religion barren of one great witness of its sway over the soul.

If the patriotic affection is provided for and expected of every man by nature, it is called for in its most intense manifestation in this land, by the *office which our country sustains among na-*

tions, and the blessings it bestows upon us. The present is a very favorable time for considering anew, some of the most common of these blessings, since we have now a background of European shadow to give them strong relief. For five years past, the aspirations and hopes of great nations have been expressed by the one word *Liberty*.—In the year 1848, one wild cry suddenly disturbed the air of Western Europe, and the rotten throne of France gave way: a vision gleamed before the eye of Germany, and roused its phlegmatic heart: the palace of Vienna echoed the deliberate voice of treason: the bayonets of Prussia were pointed for a moment against the throne: Italy bristled from Milan to Venice with democratic ardor, and even the muddy blood of Spain was quickened by a quicker pulse of zeal.—The word so lately uttered in a cry of exultation, is now escaping from the popular breast of Europe in a sigh of despair. But the groans of Hungary, and the stolid insensibility of Germany, and the restlessness of France, and the sullen silence of Rome, while the chains are being riveted anew, tell us as clearly as the watchfires of insurrection, that so lately burned in quick and fierce response to each other in every European capital, that no permanent quiet for society is possible, till republican freedom has a final wrestle with privilege and despotism.

We have lived in quiet amid all this uproar. The wide oscillation of popular feeling; the sudden swell and ebb of popular hope and passion, have not sent even a ripple of danger to threaten the structure of our society. Just think of it, gentlemen. In our *free* states, we see the spectacle of a *whole people*, rulers and students, polished and ignorant, rich and poor, all listening eagerly to hear of the triumph of the masses in the old world; all sending across the ocean the pledge of their sympathy with struggling brethren. There is nothing here which the electric heat of foreign insurrection could kindle; no class in the Northern states of this Republic which the contagious fervor of European enthusiasm could arouse to resistance against oppression.—Such

an experience as this should awaken in us a fresh sense, and a deeper sense of our civil blessings and our political privileges. We are prone to forget them, or at least to under-estimate them. It is thought to be a fault of the American character that it is too vain-glorious, too boastful of the institutions it has founded. But I do not think we appreciate them calmly, reverently, deeply enough. We think of them as common benefits, like health, sunlight, fresh air, and society. If we were obliged to walk through a hospital every day, where the maimed and the diseased lay suffering around us, we should feel more deeply the blessings of bodily health and strength. If we could look often into dark, damp, unwholesome prisons, where men and women languished in solitary bondage, and wasted away before the prime of their years, we should feel how blessed are the gifts of sunlight and fresh air, and free intercourse with our kindred and our kind. And these convulsions of European society, these struggles between caste and privilege on the one side, and the corrosive consciousness of wrong and the wild hunger for justice on the other, which, for fifty years, have been silently progressing, and but recently have taken the form of open war, should furnish the contrast that will impress upon us the worth of our own civilization, because of its strength and stability.

It is now quite apparent that the great value of our system of government is that for which the advocates of monarchy have always praised their favored plan—*superior stability*. Who in our free states fears that the deepest, fiercest popular excitement would harm a single abutment, or break a single safeguard of our civil constitution? Compared with the native strength of our charters, there is not a continental constitution but is brittle parchment, that must be upheld by military force. The political working of the great European states is that of a machine going regularly by artificial checks and balances: society is a pyramid falsely, but skillfully balanced upon its apex; while ours is more like the free operation of natural life, in which the vital

forces play in harmony, and the body moves and acts with healthy vigor, restrained by the *natural fear* of disorder and disease.

We are often taunted, and too often galled by the flippant criticisms of travellers from abroad, that our institutions are too young, our society too coarse, or that the uneducated and the vicious have too perilous an influence in our state affairs. But suppose that this be true to treble the extent it can be allowed to be true,—is it a small compensation that we sleep secure from the fear of social convulsion?—that we have no apprehension of civil earthquakes?—that we can feel the structure of our polity to be stable and firm? If the owner of a splendid vineyard on the slope of Vesuvius should yield himself up to the uttering or publishing of a comfortable scorn of the northern scenery, and sky, and climate at the very moment when the crater above him was belching ashes and lava from its throat, and the crust on which his vineyard stood was heaving from the force of hidden heat, his taste need not be resented by a northern man who has the privilege of treading always on firm soil. And if any Englishman, or Frenchman, or Austrian, any lord or prince, can find food or provocation for derisive laughter at the spectacle of a government whose pillars rest securely, and have rested now for seventy years, upon the hearts of millions of all ranks of life and grades of culture, let us offer him full freedom to shake his sides. It is for us to be grateful that we are the subjects for such mirth. It is for us to thank God devoutly that our lot is cast in a society such as we see about us.

And not only when we contrast our condition with that of other countries shall we learn to appreciate and be grateful for our civil blessings; but also *when we look at the connection of our country with the course and tendency of human history*. As we look back upon the wide experience of our race, from the first hour of authentic history till now, we see that, on the surface, at least, there is strife and confusion. The waves heave madly in restless conflict. What is the *cause*, what is the ob-

ject of this effervescence, this continual struggle? What is the central impulse, or force, that has sustained the battle so steadily? It is not mere chaotic confusion which the student sees when he looks into the realm of history. It is the contest hand to hand of class against class, caste against people, might against right: or rather it is the slow wrestle of the law of right and justice with anarchical elements, which it upheaves and upheaves that they may fall into more natural relations, and produce a more solid order. This is the central law that gives unity to the movements and course of history. And it is in proportion to the power with which they have aided or retarded this struggle, that different nations are now felt to be of importance, and to have left a stamp on the fortunes of mankind.

The relative greatness or richness of the life manifested by the Persian, the Egyptian, the Hindoo, the Greek, the Roman empires and kingdoms, is estimated by the effect which each has left upon the civil progress and education of the human race. And the total power and importance of any prominent state of the *present* time,—England or France, Turkey or Austria, the United States or Russia, can only be expressed by the influence it can or does exert, by aid or opposition, upon the advance and triumph of rational views of liberty in the earth. The glory of History, that which redeems it from being a Babel babble of unmeaning sounds, a shapeless chaos of warring elements, is the slow evolution of social order, which dimly appears when we look at it, century by century, and trace along the thread of its great events.

If there is a moral Providence above and around us, there must be an unfolding purpose,—no matter how slow its process, no matter how many checks beset it,—discernible in History. Evidently it is not God's dearest purpose that History should be the background, the opportunity, and the occasion for the appearance and manifestation of great men. If it were so, we should have to say, perhaps, that its culminating period is far behind

us; for it is doubtful whether, for pure force of intellect, or breadth of genius, or powers of eloquence, any modern names can be found to mate with Pythagoras and Plato, Homer and Æschylus, Pericles and Demosthenes, Hannibal and Cæsar: men of *greater attainments*, doubtless, may be found; but it is because they have had better materials to work with, and the experience of former times to aid them,—not, I think, because their native force of genius was greater.

Neither is it the great purpose of God in History, as many think, to educate a *special class*, who shall be raised above the necessity and degradation of toil, and enabled to perfect themselves as models of humanity. For, in such a case, the social structure of Hindostan, or perhaps the plantations of South Carolina, would furnish the ideal of a state. Nor can we believe that it is for the purpose of realizing the highest degree of perfection in art, or social refinement, that the race goes on in its stormy and sad career. For then ancient Athens, or modern Paris, would be the apex of social possibility; and from such a conclusion the deepest instincts of a true heart recoil. The great purpose of History is a broad, beneficent *moral* purpose. The great force which throbs under the heaving surface of human experience is nothing else than justice. The struggles and oscillations of History, the rise, decay, and overthrow of states and empires, are the means by which a *great political principle* may be burned into the consciousness of mankind; they are the steps towards the printing of some one law of equity in the statute books of the future. *The purpose of God, the ideal of History, is to bring men into just and natural relations to each other in the machinery of the state.* Everything else is subordinate in Providence to this. The nation that succeeds even splendidly in any other line of culture, but is false to this great mission, will be smitten with mildew, and at last, will perish ingloriously from the world.

The best things, the most vital blessings are of slowest growth.

Fifty great geniuses arise, and charm the mind and heart of men, where one element of justice rises to be enthroned in parchment and to receive the countersign of Kings. Palaces filled with a cultivated and polished aristocracy are raised and die, while Nature is preparing the mind of one Franklin or Jefferson. A hundred faultless statues and paintings are enshrined in the palaces and art-galleries of cities, before one equitable social principle is uttered clearly in the constitution of an empire. But it is for this that History is created by the existence and experience of nations. The true epochs of history are marked by the dawning consciousness of rights in the minds of the people, by the retreat of might before the advance of justice, by the relaxing grasp of power to the persuasion of a feeling of mercy, by the deeper recognition of equality in the conscience of a nation, and a nearer approach to it in the structure of a state.

And therefore, I say, we ought to cherish the deepest sense of our social privileges and blessings; for if the principle we have laid down is true, the structure of government and society in the northern United States is the highest attainment humanity has yet reached; it is the culminating point thus far in history.—Here, on a scale never dreamed before, and in a perfection which, if New England had not existed as she is for 70 years, would be pronounced impossible and Utopian by every great European statesman, is revealed the harmonious marriage of Liberty and law. The ballot-box, in which every citizen of our free States may leave his vote; the school, to which any child, of parentage however poor, may go and gain that knowledge which is the key to power; the Bill of Rights, which declares the broad principles of social equality before the law; the tax-bill, in which not a cent is asked for the support of hereditary rulers, or a titled class; the Capitol, with doors thrown wide for the entrance of the humblest citizen, and where every class is represented in the construction of the statutes; the jury-room, where twelve of his own mates stand between the weakest

human being and oppression ; the church, which no member of the community is constrained to maintain, but which each may support with creed and service according to his taste or conscience ; the streets, unguarded except by civil force ; the daily paper, in which the severest criticism of public men and measures may be printed and read with safety and without harm ; the cottages and homes, where honest labor enjoys a sense of dignity, the pleasures of affection and the comforts of life ; and the quiet moral force that is a more powerful defence of all than a million bayonets, are not spectacles or blessings so frequent, or so cheap, that we can be justified in enjoying them as matters of course.

For the tendrils of our blessings stretch far out into the centuries and twine around the most precious elements of history to draw nourishment. The human race is vitally one, and whatever is eminent or best in any line of social manifestation, is somehow connected with other and the most distant portions of the common body ; as the topmost branch of a tree bears life that is due, in part, to the health and fidelity of juices in the root, and as the wave that foams upon the shore, discharges an undulation that began far out upon the sea. Let us cherish them as rich and undeserved endowments of Providential love.

They acquire new importance when seen in the proper historical setting. More than great poems, or splendid works of art, or the productions of master-thinkers, they indicate the progress of the race. They are the various notes and modulations of the triumphal ode of justice, rising over the defeat of wrong. The human race has waded through bloody centuries, and groped down the dreary pathways of dark ages, that we might possess such treasures. Great thinkers have toiled, and written, and suffered poverty, and been branded with shame, that they might be ours. The blood of martyrs has sprinkled scaffolds, or bubbled at the stake, and their bones have bleached on gibbets, or rotted in dungeons, as the condition of our freedom.

Influences that began before the field of Marathon, that were strengthened by the short career and splendid literature of Greece, by the early courage and virtue of Rome, by the spreading energy of Christianity, by the Italian republics of the middle ages, by the hardy manliness of Swiss mountaineers, by the meeting of King John and his barons at Runnymede, by the calm bravery of the Long Parliament, and the rugged zeal of Cromwell, by the pen and sufferings of Milton, and the triumph of the English Revolution, have rolled this precious legacy down the stream of time and washed it to our shores. Ought we not to feel, and feel reverently, that we are endowed and blessed as no other people is, or ever has been, endowed or blessed?

The criticism is often launched against our country to cool our patriotism, as though it were a fatal shaft, *that we live in a fresh world*, that there is no grand past behind us, that our society is coarse and low, that our literature is poor and shallow. Our territory is new, and our society, if it is not elevated so far by the culture, is not yet hopelessly corrupted with the artificial follies of aristocratic lands. But let us insist proudly and firmly that our ancestry includes every noble period in the history of every nation that has lived, and that the political structure of our state reveals the highest wave of human progress. Let us maintain that justice between man and man, and the acknowledgement of human worth, find in parts of our country alone, the broadest sway and amplest utterance. And let us seek no apologies to explain the fact that we have raised no Shakespeare or Bacon, Goethe or Dante, Raffaele or Canova, but declare that our great poem is the Declaration of Independence; that our works of art are the Constitutions of New England and the North; that our triumphs of genius are the National election-days: and that our great Histories are the *acted* Histories of States founded, forests felled and changing into cities, and a new empire won for freedom on the shores of

the Pacific sea, soon to be accompanied by another republic bordering the Missouri, which every true Northern man should swear to-day shall be sacred to liberty. Can any literature be produced that, for inherent splendor or for influence upon mankind, will compare with this?

It is thus that the sentiment of patriotism is stimulated and fed by Providence in every dweller upon our land that appreciates the position and the history of the Republic. Providence calls upon the obscurest citizen here to feel it an immense enlargement of his being—an enlargement which mere wealth, with all its privileges, could not give,—that he has partnership in a mission with a people—along whom God is pouring the best life of the past, enriched with additional streams of inspiration, solicited by our own genius, into the future.

“*Into the future!*” These are more important words than any we have yet uttered; for they suggest to us our own responsibilities and duties. Our greatest poet has written of our destiny in cheering rhythm:

“Here the free spirit of mankind, at length,
Throws its last fetters off; and who shall place
A limit to the giant’s unchained strength,
Or curb its swiftness in the forward race?
Far, like the comet’s way through infinite space,
Stretches the long, untravelled path of light
Into the depths of ages; we may trace,
Distant, the brightening glory of his flight,
Till the receding rays are lost to human sight.”

The fulfilment of this prophecy depends on us and those who come after us. Providence has blessed us richly, but it never completes its blessings. It leaves much to be done by the fidelity of the recipients; and it never blesses one race or one generation *for itself alone*. The Hebrews were a chosen race; the selectest mercies of Heaven were showered upon them,—but they were bestowed *as a trust for the world*. The Hebrews were faithless to their privileges; yet the world has received

the intended benefits, while they who were the channels of them have been long abandoned to the remorseless laws of retribution.

We are left with a great idea, with a splendid mission and with a worthy theatre on which to develope and fulfill it. All our traditions, that feed our patriotism, address our sense of duty and broaden our sentiments. Every land is called to a mission of peculiar service for truth, for social welfare for the human race. The spirit of patriotism is desired and sanctioned of Heaven that men may work, through love of their various countries, for the advancement of these lines of special good. Each Englishman, Austrian, German, or Italian, is a wise and efficient patriot who comprehends the genius and providential call of his country, interprets it to his brethren, and stimulates them to acknowledge and be faithful to it; and when they all work thus, be sure they will all be working in harmony for universal welfare, for God's purposes or benefit towards one people will not jar with the peace and welfare of the rest.

Here is the great point to be engraven upon the mind, that patriotism is DEVOTION TO THE IDEA which a country is called to represent. It is an *imaginative* sentiment. The soul of a patriot, through the devout study of the past annals of his land, through deep sympathy with the capacities and passions of his countrymen, through reverence for truth and liberty, and worship of the Providence that watches and protects them, forms a vivid conception of *what his country would be* if the desire of God in its foundation were accomplished. He holds before his mind an ideal polity and state, which his land would embody if its call from Heaven were fulfilled in outward institutions; and then he devotes himself to that conception and bows before the ideal senate-house and capitol which rear themselves in the architecture of his sacred dream. A patriot is therefore often called upon to oppose the present rulers, to denounce the present policy, to thwart, if possible, the present

tendencies, to cry out with a prophet's voice against the present passions, of his people, and the drift they indicate, out of wise and unflattering love for his *real land*,—for the country which Providence desires to see uplifting and entrenching itself on the soil he treads, and which is opposed by the spirit and the policy of the rulers of the hour. Just as the sculptor knows that the block of marble under his hand is entrusted to him by the spirit of beauty to enshrine an ideal form, or group, that is shown to his inward eye, the patriot is one of a large company of *political artists*, and to him is revealed the symmetrical proportions and ideal glory of his land in vision, that through his influence and his fellow-patriots, the hard lineaments and the deformities of the state, as it now is, may gradually soften and refine towards that immortal splendor.

And the need of that sentiment with us—the need of influences to vivify and deepen it, springs from the fact that our country has so *important* an ideal character, so *vast* a representative value. Its mountains were upheaved, its rivers were grooved, its prairies unrolled, its night-skies bent, for the home of the most generous and expansive principles. The mission of our patriotism is to keep it true to them. We cannot have any true glory on other terms; we cannot have permanent strength on other terms. How can we be true Americans if our love of country is not thus baptized and directed? How are we true patriots if we are not consecrated to *God's America*—the ideal America, of which his wisdom has sketched the outline before our imagination—if we are devoted to a miserable counterfeit of our own fancy, the place where we may trade, grow rich by bartering principles for commerce, enjoy ourselves ingloriously, and die? No; if the glory of the foundation of our land was the *establishment* of a principle, the glory of its history must consist in the *unfolding* of that principle. And all the material prosperity, all the social splendor and the swelling civil power of the nation, are only signs of its failure, if any great

principle to which the land was baptized, is lost sight of, dwindles, is insulted and betrayed.

These thoughts bear directly upon present issues. It seems to me that we cannot study aright the purpose of Providence in our own polity and in the future of our country, unless we include the welfare of *many races* in the scheme of Heaven. The very earliest history of our continent,—the annals of the *voyages* of discoveries and of the first settlements, seem to be symbolic, or prophetic, of its future destiny. It was dedicated from the very first, by the service of various states and races in drawing the outlines of its coasts, mapping its rivers and clearing away the wilderness for the first features of civilization, to the future use of all the tribes of men. The *Spaniards* made the first heroic venture which proved that the ocean was hemmed by Western land. Dim myths attribute the honor of the first visit to the northern portion of the continent to *Scandinavian* fishermen, a thousand years ago. It was an *Italian* who first announced, during the lifetime of Columbus, in a letter to a European statesman, that the region which Columbus had disclosed was not the westerly portion of the East Indies, but a new hemisphere, and from that Italian, Amerigo Vespucci, the hemisphere is named. The northern mainland of the continent was first seen from the deck of *English* vessels. *Portuguese* coasters first ranged along and visited the shores of Carolina and Virginia. It was an *Italian* navigator that first entered the harbor of New York. It was by *Dutch* enterprise that the Hudson and Connecticut were discovered and explored. It was a *French* keel that first cut the waters of St Lawrence, and upheld a civilized flag in our northernmost sky. The banks of the Delaware were colonized by *Swedes*, and the suburbs of Philadelphia were occupied by them before the advent of Penn.

Not only different races and languages were combined in the work of discovery and settlement, but *different religions and types of civilization* were pressed into that service. The

Spaniards belted the gulf of Mexico; the French Huguenots consecrated the coasts of Carolinas to their exiled faith; Virginia was dedicated to the customs of the gentlemanly, jovial Cavaliers; the Quakers laid their consecrating hands upon the soil of Pennsylvania; Maryland was claimed in the name of a Saxon and tolerant Catholicism; New York is the rightful possession, according to tradition, of the Reformed Dutch Church; and New England was seized in behalf of the rigid Calvinistic faith.

Thus the traditions of the country recognize the heroism and the assistance of Southern and Middle and Northern Europe, of Catholic and Protestant combinations, of Catholicism persecuted in England and of Protestantism banished from France, of races representing almost every variety of mankind that now seeks an asylum within our latitudes, in drawing away the curtain of ignorance from the shores of North America, and in devoting it to the institutions of civilized men.

One race was Divinely aided to obtain supremacy over all the rest, and to lay firm here the foundations of a free civil polity: but do we not see in the earliest history of the country a plain intimation that this race was so selected only to be the steward for the rest,—only to lay the warp firm in the great loom, before the variegated woof should come, flying in winged shuttles, from every land across the sea that was represented in the discovery and the first colonization of America? God tells us through the Bible, in the annals of that race that felt itself most solemnly elected, that his favorites are endowed with commanding and conspicuous capacities only to be the servants of other less gifted peoples.

Indeed, if any body can see anything but an inspiring, sublime and hopeful spectacle in the emigration movement to this country, and *westward* in this country, in the last twenty years, he studies them, I must believe, with an eye not enlightened by a comparsion of the spectacle of similar great movements of history,

or an eye that is not illumined with the proper charity. When we read the records of the downfall of the Roman Empire, in the fifth century, we find that all social order was shattered, that almost every structure of civilization was defaced and jarred, by the wild stamp of the loosened northern tribes, eager for more fruitful lands and a more hospitable home. We feel the earth shake under the shaggy legions of Alaric and Attila. Fields are trampled, towns are sacked, cities are stormed and left half in ruins; the vast edifice of polity and civilization, which the Roman mind had reared, trembled, tottered, breaks asunder, and leaves only its wonderful pillars standing around the rubbish, to attest its ancient majesty, and represent the stormy onslaught of the fierce myriads.

But "peace hath its victories more glorious than war." The descendants of those very barbarians have poured upon our country within our lifetime—yes, have poured larger numbers upon us, than came down upon the Roman empire in the fifth century of our era,—and who of us has felt it? how many of us have known, by any thing which our eyes have seen, that such a mighty movement of nations has been going on? They have come here by *hundreds* of thousands—"the emigrant for conscience sake, and for freedom's sake, from every land in Europe—from proud and all conquering Britain, from heart broken Ireland, from sunny Italy, from beautiful France, from spiritual Germany, from chivalrous Hungary, from honest and brave old Sweden and Norway:"—they have come and marched westward, in multitudes which no man can number, and the result has been, the birth of magnificent states, the opening of canals and railroads to vein our monstrous area, or to marry our lakes and rivers with the sea, and the carpeting of our prairies with grain to send back from our surplus, to the armies and artizans of Europe the sustenance of life.

Simply for the sake of the startling parallel thus presented with the myriads of the fifth century, and the majestic sermon it

preaches in favor of peace, who would *lose* these chapters of the last twenty or thirty years from the volume of our history? What eulogium of our system of government, of the stability of republicanism, could be so impressive as this transit of nations across our borders, silent and swift as legions of ghosts, and their quiet crystalization into political social order, among the melting forests and on the rich meadows of the west? Is not this *the crowning glory* of our political system,—this widening of the area of our polity, this doubling of the number of its pillars, and the expansion of the great dome to cover them all,—the broadening of its cope, as though it were no solid structure, but an aerial creation,—until, in less than a human lifetime, it gathers under its roof a nation of various foreigners, *larger* than the colonial nation which won our Independence on these shores, and yet without looking down upon the spectacle of any one of them put to death for any treason or conspiracy against the structure of the state? Any such movement in Europe would have shaken the social order of the continent more than Napoleon's armies did. The spectacle of this migration is the resplendent honor of our country, the most magnificent testimony that could be offered to the wisdom of our institutions, as well as to the natural love of order and peace in the human heart.

It would detain you too long, gentlemen, were I to unfold all my belief with regard to the broad purposes of Providential good suggested by the diversity of race in our country; and I ought to allude for a moment to the dangers that so many of our best citizens are now fearing from this variety of blood. We must guard against everything, of course, that would hinder the growth of unity of sentiment of one national feeling in our boundaries. We must oppose every tendency that would keep alive different languages as the common methods of communication; and every movement on the part of politicians to gain favor with the different races among us by direct flattery of their distinctions. We must impress upon the immigrating races the duty of merging themselves, as to feeling, into a new nationality.

And yet this last is a work which we must not expect to see achieved in a year. Where the Saguenay pours its flood into the St. Lawrence, the water of that mighty river is pushed aside for a long distance by the rush of that deep and dark tributary from the distant lakes and hills. Yet a mile or two, either way, from the jaws of the Saguenay the tide of the St. Lawrence assumes its wonted majesty. So it will be in our country, in relation to the enflowing stream of races. For a while they will keep their clannishness; but soon by the force of constant causes, must spread and be absorbed in the larger stream of the national life. Schools and the press will work the cure, if no disturbing influences intervene. Schools will break up the isolating power of a foreign speech; the press will saturate the mental atmosphere with the stimulant of a new patriotism:—and we shall scarcely need to wait for a fresh generation, to see the foreign element sufficiently assimilated to the general mind of the land. Education is our safeguard. Public schools are our true barricades against the peril of immigration. Our protection is precisely in the line of our duty. It need not turn off our thought from admiration of the broad plan which God has sketched for national glory here, in leading so many races to conspire in the building up of a great polity.

And now let us go on to see, gentlemen, that the Revolution which we, to-day, honor and are grateful for, was but *one step* of our march, and represents but one phase of our mission. It was the vigorous wrestle of our ideas against the bands that would crush them in their infancy. It was the struggle of the early rays of light with the clouds that would absorb them. By its battles and bloodshed it was the *red aurora* of our ideas upon the Eastern sky, announcing the simple light, the breaking day.—The men who labored then were faithful to their hour, and to their spiritual descendants; *we must work* in their temple of devotion at our appointed and our different tasks.

The vivifying idea of the Revolution was the worth and the

rights of man. The logical premise of the "Declaration" was, not the right of a community to rebel against unjust laws, but the right of every man to have justice,—in other words the value of the individual soul. It is this splendid moral truth that dignifies the Revolution, and from the first raised it above a mere Rebellion; this which invested the roar of the musketry on Bunker Hill with an ideal music, and makes even the non-resistant peace men love the sweet echoes that firing has awakened in the depth of time; this which gives an ideal grandeur to the silent, solid shaft that towers above Charleston and surveys the sea.

The essence of our Fathers' dispute was not political and diplomatic, but theological and moral, and through us, if we would be living Americans, in the line of advance, that idea must thrive and produce its finer spiritual fruit. In this respect, the growth of our country should be like that of the Palm tree; the gradual development of the life principle at the center should manifest itself in the nourishment of new products, throwing the old results, year by year, farther out into history, till the political effects of the Revolution become the gnarled root, and the tall hardy stem, which preserve and defend the active inward forces, that now unfold in leaves and blossoms, and announce the harvest. —To suppose that it is a sufficient expression of patriotism merely to cheer and rejoice in the Revolution and the men who conducted it, is as foolish as it would be for the tree to be content with its bark, and restrain its juices and hold back its garbure of fruit. The trunk is for the *protection of the inward life*, and the political structure which through fidelity of our Revolutionary fathers, now enfolds us, should be regarded as chiefly valuable because it enables to unfold still further, and into higher forms, the seminal principles of truth from which its boughs and branches, and its whole tough skeleton was generated.

We may show our loyalty to the Revolution by faithfulness to the ideas of human worth and rights in the new circumstances that encircle us, and the new problems God sets before our

hearts and hands.—In the peace movement; in the temperance reform; in all calm, judicious and practicable schemes for the abolition of bondage within our borders; in resolute, unconquerable consecration of our efforts to resist at all hazards its extension over new territory; in the erection of hospitals, asylums, and schools; in the attempts to discover and establish a more christian organization of society—in every association and all effort that seek the highest welfare of man, and prepare the way for his free culture and rightful enjoyment, as a creature of God, the American idea justifies itself and culminates; in sympathy with such schemes we are in vital sympathy with the heroism of the past; we import its spirit into our modern duties; and in such ways, and only thus, can Patriotism be fully faithful to its law and vindicate its nature.

It is very pleasant to study the diversity of national life, to observe the operations of that scheme which calls each nation to a special mission,—to incarnate some one thought, or fulfill one grand design of Providence. We may array before the mind's eye in symbolic images, or impersonations, the various offices and attainments of the chief kingdoms of the globe. We may contemplate the Hebrew race as appointed to be the artery to carry religious life from the universal heart of inspiration to the extreme limits of human nature. We may call up the embodied type of the Grecian genius in the form of some *Æschylus*, or *Plato*, whose ideal proportions are as harmonious as the diction and severe as the art of their native land. We may look in fancy upon the compact gravity of the Roman character, as expressed in some *Cato* or *Cæsar*, and in that wonderful system of jurisprudence which lies at the base of European civilization. We may trace in the loom of history the winding and golden thread of the Italian intellect, so subtle and pliant, competent to weave the finest tissue of beauty, and adorning the genius of *Dante*, *Raffaello*, *Angelo* and *Napoleon*.—Or to use a more fitting image, we may see in the long procession of nations the figure of

majestic *Spain*, with her wild robe of lyric and romance, attended by Cervantes and Calderon: mystic, star-crowned *Germany*, looking far into the night, holding out to men, as her legacy, the volumes of Kant's spiritual insight and Goethe's all sided culture; impulsive and enthusiastic *Arabia* with her crescent, her Mohammed, and her Koran; heavy browed and sombre *Egypt*, with a mien and gait that suggests the Sphinx, the Pyramids, and the massive gates of Thebes; the grotesque, imaginative, dreamy *India*, with her ponderous folios, her vast cosmogonies, and pathless speculations about the Infinite; stolid *China*, wrapped in the untattered drapery of her customs, woven thousands of years ago; brilliant *France*, with clear and sparkling eye, the interpreter of the world, pointing to her favorite children—Racine, Laplace, Cuvier and Fenelon; the magnetic *north*, bound about the brows with the mythology of Iceland, giving us the prophecy of its power in Peter the Great and Swedenborg; dignified and stately *England*, with sturdy neck, and haughty brow, and cunning hand, the embodiment of science, and blending in the impression of its great presence the genius of Saxon Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Newton.

And now in what form and mien shall America break upon our imagination? What features shall our country take before an impartial poetic eye? What image shall express the design of Providence in its creation, represent a just generalization from its history, and embody the fair prophecies of its future? It may not compete with its great forerunners in literature, in art, in the most polished trophies of intellectual skill. But shall not its guardian genius come,—the last in this symbolic train, the youngest and favored child of Providence, with beaming face and a full eye of love, holding in its right hand the Declaration of Independence,—a people's solemn and deliberate act of Prayer,—the gospel of civil hope and cheer to all men,—and in its left, the chart of a country which has a home for every desponding wanderer, and where in some bright and blessed epoch of the

future, no slave shall stain and infect the soil, but the earnest and worthy of every continent, and race, and faith, and clime, shall unite with our descendants in enjoying and sustaining the blessings of a social structure, the model edifice of the ages, that recognizes and defends every civil and spiritual right of man.

Such a picture alone can meet and express the design of Providence in the American Revolution. Such a picture alone can satisfy the just hopes of our fathers who periled treasure, peace, and life for a great idea.

And as the last thought, in the services of this day, shall fitly be given to them, let it be a *reverential* thought, that blending of respect and love, which while it is the proper tribute to their virtues and their worth, shall quicken *our* hearts, also, with a desire to cultivate the one and imitate the other.—They have gone where sectional jealousies and national divisions shall be unknown forever; to the unseen mysterious land, we trust to the mercies of God, the universal Father, and to heaven, the final home. But, if the affairs of men and the destiny of the race are permitted to engage their interest, and to enlist their sympathy, to intrude upon the fulness of their well-earned peace, they bend with an affectionate regard over this, their earthly home, sacred through their toils, hallowed by their blood, illustrious with their graves. They would have this nation faithful to the whole idea which was hidden beneath their work, and whose full meaning they now behold. They would have this Union, the marvellous organism that sprang up in the track of their blood, sacred to human good and social progress, and cemented, so as to defy every plan of rupture by one pervading and unifying sentiment of gratitude to God and love of Liberty, sending its electric strength from the confines of Maine to the borders of Mexico, and from the St. Lawrence to the ripples on the Pacific shore. They would have the patriotism which is ever effectually adjured by their memories, their battle-fields, and the monuments that all over

our domain, bear mute but eloquent witness to their virtue and valor, and patriotism not narrow, but expansive as the Gospel of Christ; a patriotism not satisfied with the legacies of the past, but which clings to its land as the destined seat of a vast Christian Commonwealth; a patriotism that inspires every American heart to labor for the coming of the time, when, all over the world, the heroes of our Revolution shall be venerated as the Apostles and Martyrs of humanity, America be regarded as the Asylum of the weary and the oppressed, and the name *American* be everywhere synonymous with honor, purity, and brotherly love.

